CLAIMS

1. Oral pharmaceutical formulation in the form of a granulate comprising more than 60% by weight of mesalazine or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

2. Pharmaceutical formulation according to claim 1 comprising more than 70% by weight of mesalazine or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

3. Pharmaceutical formulation according to claim 1 comprising more than 80% by weight of mesalazine or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

4. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, having in vitro release characteristics of mesalazine of at least 40% released after 240 min, of the total amount of mesalazine in the formulation, measured in a model system using a USP Paddle System 2 operated at 37°C with stirring at 100 rpm.

5. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, having in vitro release characteristics of mesalazine of
a) 5 - 25 % released after 15 min;
b) 30 - 70 %, preferably 40 - 60 %, released after 90 min; and
c) 75 - 100 % released after 240 min;
of the total amount of mesalazine in the formulation measured in a model system using a USP Paddle System 2 operated at 37°C with stirring at 100 rpm.

6. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, having a similarity factor f_2 above 30, preferably above 40, more preferred above 50, as compared to a standard having the in vitro release characteristics of mesalazine of
a) 12 % released after 15 min;
b) 50 % released after 90 min; and
c) 85 % released after 240 min;
as measured under the conditions of claim 5.

7. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable binder, preferably Povidone, in an amount less than or equal to an amount selected among the group consisting of 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10 and 12 % by weight.

8. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, further comprising a coating, preferably comprising or consisting of ethylcellulose.

9. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, comprising a coating, the ratio of the weight of said coating to the weight of said mesalazine or said pharmaceutically acceptable salt being selected among 0.1-10%; 0.3-7%; 0.5-5%; 0.7-3%; 0.8-2%; and 0.9-1.5%.

10. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, essentially consisting of mesalazine, a pharmaceutically acceptable binder and a coating.

11. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, wherein said pharmaceutical formulation is packed in a sachet.

12. Method for manufacturing a pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the preceding claims, comprising the steps:
a) mixing mesalazine with granulation liquid;
b) obtaining granulate by granulating, compacting or extruding;
c) drying the granulate;
d) adjusting the size of the granulate as necessary; and
e) sieving the granulate as necessary;
characterised in the additional step of:
f) coating the granulate;
and optionally further:
g) sieving the coated granulate;
h) air purging the coated granulate.

13. Method according to claim 12, wherein said coated granulate are packed in a sachet.

14. Method according to claim 12 or 13, wherein said granulation liquid consists of Povidone dissolved in water.

15. Method according to any of the claims 12 - 14, wherein said drying step c) is performed in a fluid bed dryer.

16. Method according to any of the claims 12 - 15, wherein said adjusting of size step d) is performed by milling.

17. Method according to any of the claims 12 - 16, wherein said sieving step e) is performed by selecting granulate passing a 1.8 mm sieve, but not passing a 0.5 mm sieve.

18. Method according to any of the claims 12 - 17, wherein said coating step f) is performed with ethylcellulose.

19. Method according to any of the claims 12 - 18, wherein said coating step f) is performed by applying an amount of coating material adjusted, according to the specific surface area, to be in the range 0.09 - 0.17 mg/cm^2, preferably 0.11 - 0.15 mg/cm^2, followed by drying.

20. Method according to any of the claims 12 - 19, wherein said sieving step g) is performed on a rotation sieve, preferably with a mesh size of 2.5 mm.

21. Use of mesalazine for the manufacture of a pharmaceutical formulation according to any of the claims 1 - 11, comprising a total dosage amount of mesalazine chosen among the group consisting of 0,5 g; 1,0 g; 1,5 g; 2 g; 3 g; 4 g; 5 g; 6 g; 8 g; and 10 g; preferably packed in a sachet.

22. Use according to the preceding claim, wherein the medicament is for the treatment of intestinal bowel disease, preferably Crohns's Disease or Ulcerative Colitis.